

THE VIRGINIANS

A TALE OF THE LAST CENTURY.

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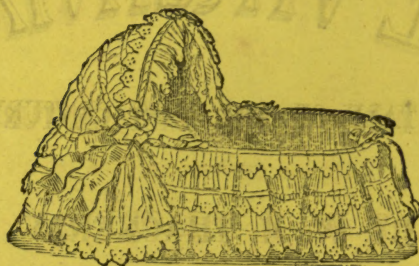
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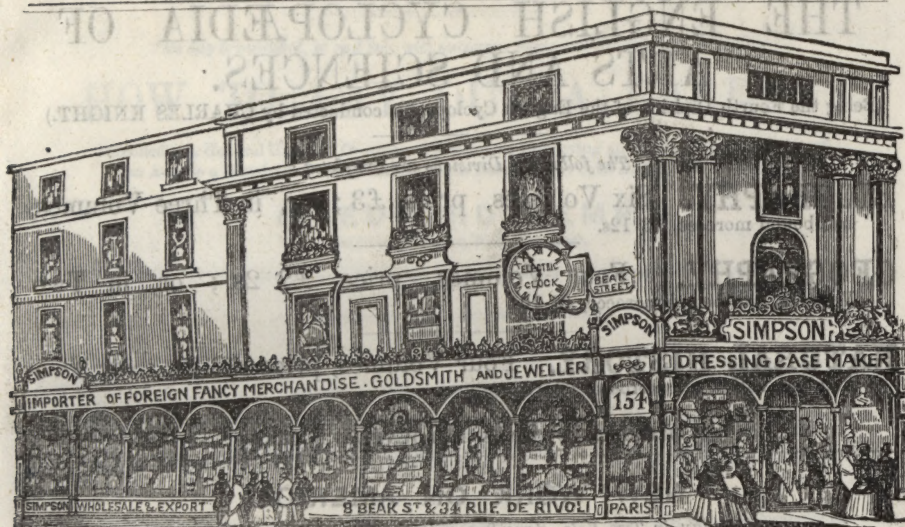
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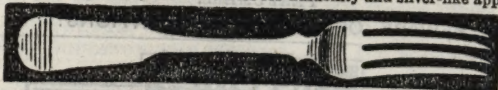
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CHAPTER XX.

IN WHICH HARRY GOES WESTWARD.



OUR tender hearts are averse to all ideas and descriptions of parting; and I shall therefore say nothing of Harry Warrington's feelings at taking leave of his brother and friends. Were not thousands of men in the same plight? Had not Mr. Wolfe his mother to kiss (his brave father had quitted life during his son's absence on the glorious Louisbourg campaign), and his sweetheart to clasp in a farewell embrace? Had

not stout Admiral Holmes, before sailing westward with his squadron, The Somerset, The Terrible, The Northumberland, The Royal William, The Trident, The Diana, The Sea-horse—his own flag being hoisted on board The Dublin—to take leave of Mrs. and the Misses Holmes? Was Admiral Saunders, who sailed the day after him, exempt from human feeling? Away go William and his crew of jovial sailors, ploughing through the tumbling waves, and poor Black-eyed Susan on shore watches the ship as it dwindles in the sunset.

It dwindles in the West. The night falls darkling over the ocean. They are gone: but their hearts are at home yet awhile. In silence, with a heart inexpressibly soft and tender, how each man thinks of those he has left! What a chorus of pitiful prayer rises up to the Father, at sea and on shore, on that parting night: at home by the vacant bedside, where the wife kneels in tears; round the fire, where

the mother and children together pour out their supplications : on or deck, where the sea-farer looks up to the stars of heaven, as the ship cleaves through the roaring midnight waters ! To-morrow the sun rises upon our common life again, and we commence our daily task of toil and duty.

George accompanies his brother, and stays awhile with him at Portsmouth whilst they are waiting for a wind. He shakes Mr. Wolfe's hand, looks at his pale face for the last time, and sees the vessels depart amid the clangour of bells, and the thunder of cannon from the shore. Next day he is back at his home, and at that business which is sure one of the most selfish and absorbing of the world's occupations, to which almost every man who is thirty years old has served ere this his apprenticeship. He has a pang of sadness, as he looks in at the lodgings to the little room which Harry used to occupy, and sees his half-burned papers still in the grate. In a few minutes he is on his way to Dean Street again, and whispering by the fitful firelight in the ear of the clinging sweetheart. She is very happy—O so happy ! at his return. She is ashamed of being so. Is it not heartless to be so, when poor Hetty is so melancholy ? Poor little Hetty ! Indeed, it *is* selfish to be glad when she is in such a sad way. It makes one quite wretched to see her. "Don't, sir ! Well, I *ought* to be wretched, and it's very, very wicked of me if I'm not," says Theo ; and one can understand her soft-hearted repentance. What she means by "Don't" who can tell ? I have said the room was dark, and the fire burned fitfully—and "Don't" is no doubt uttered in one of the dark fits. Enter servants with supper and lights. The family arrives ; the conversation becomes general. The destination of the fleet is known everywhere now. The force on board is sufficient to beat all the French in Canada ; and, under such an officer as Wolfe, to repair the blunders and disasters of previous campaigns. He looked dreadfully ill, indeed. But he has a great soul in a feeble body. The ministers, the country hope the utmost from him. After supper, according to custom, Mr. Lambert assembles his modest household, of whom George Warrington may be said quite to form a part ; and as he prays for all travellers by land and water, Theo and her sister are kneeling together. And so, as the ship speeds farther and farther into the West, the fond thoughts pursue it ; and the night passes, and the sun rises.

A day or two more, and everybody is at his books or his usual work. As for George Warrington, that celebrated dramatist is busy about another composition. When the tragedy of Carpezan had run some thirty or two-score nights, other persons of genius took possession of the theatre.

There may have been persons who wondered how the town could be so fickle as ever to tire of such a masterpiece as the Tragedy—who could not bear to see the actors dressed in other habits, reciting other men's verses ; but George, of a sceptical turn of mind, took

the fate of his Tragedy very philosophically, and pocketed the proceeds with much quiet satisfaction. From Mr. Dodsley, the bookseller, he had the usual complement of a hundred pounds; from the manager of the theatre two hundred or more; and such praises from the critics and his friends, that he set to work to prepare another piece, with which he hoped to achieve even greater successes than by his first performance.

Over these studies, and the other charming business which occupies him, months pass away. Happy business! Happiest time of youth and life, when love is first spoken and returned; when the dearest eyes are daily shining welcome, and the fondest lips never tire of whispering their sweet secrets; when the parting look that accompanies "Good night!" gives delightful warning of to-morrow; when the heart is so overflowing with love and happiness, that it has to spare for all the world; when the day closes with glad prayers, and opens with joyful hopes; when doubt seems cowardice, misfortune impossible, poverty only a sweet trial of constancy! Theo's elders, thankfully remembering their own prime, sit softly by and witness this pretty comedy performed by their young people. And in one of his later letters, dutifully written to his wife during a temporary absence from home, George Warrington records how he had been to look up at the windows of the dear old house in Dean Street, and wondered who was sitting in the chamber where he and Theo had been so happy.

Meanwhile we can learn how the time passes, and our friends are engaged, by some extracts from George's letters to his brother.

"FROM the old window opposite Bedford Gardens, this 20th August, 1759.

"WHY are you gone back to rugged rocks, bleak shores, burning summers, nipping winters, at home, when you might have been cropping ever so many laurels in Germany? Kingsley's are coming back as covered with 'em as Jack-a-Green on May-day. Our six regiments did wonders; and our horse would have done if my Lord George Sackville only had let them. But when Prince Ferdinand said 'Charge!' his lordship could not hear, or could not translate the German word for 'Forward;' and so we only beat the French, without utterly annihilating them, as we might, had Lord Granby or Mr. Warrington had the command. My lord is come back to town, and is shouting for a Court Martial. He held his head high enough in prosperity: in misfortune he shows such a constancy of arrogance that one almost admires him. He looks as if he rather envied poor Mr. Byng, and the not shooting him were a *manque d'égards* towards him.

"The Duke has had notice to get himself in readiness for departing from this world of grandeurs and victories, and downfalls and disappointments. An attack of palsy has visited his Royal Highness; and *pallida mors* has just peeped in at his door, as it were, and said, 'I will call again.' Tyrant as he was, this prince has been noble in disgrace; and no king has ever had a truer servant than ours has

found in his son. Why do I like the losing side always, and am I disposed to revolt against the winners? Your famous Mr. P——, your chief's patron and discoverer, I have been to hear in the House of Commons twice or thrice. I revolt against his magniloquence. I wish some little David would topple over that swelling giant. His thoughts and his language are always attitudinising. I like Barry's manner best, though the other is the more awful actor.

"Pocahontas gets on apace. Barry likes his part of Captain Smith; and, though he will have him wear a red coat and blue facings and an epaulet, I have a fancy to dress him exactly like one of the pictures of Queen Elizabeth's gentlemen at Hampton Court: with a ruff and a square beard and square shoes. 'And Pocahontas—would you like her to be tattooed?' asks Uncle Lambert. Hagan's part as the warrior who is in love with her, and, seeing her partiality for the Captain, nobly rescues him from death, I trust will prove a hit. A strange fish is this Hagan: his mouth full of stage-plays and rant, but good, honest, and brave, if I don't err. He is angry at having been cast lately for Sir O'Brallaghan, in Mr. Macklin's new farce of *Love À-la-mode*. He says that he does not keer to disgreece his tongue with imitections of that rascal brogue. As if there was any call for imitections, when he has such an admirable twang of his own!

"Shall I tell you? Shall I hide the circumstance? Shall I hurt your feelings? Shall I set you in a rage of jealousy, and cause you to ask for leave to return to Europe? Know, then, that though Carpezan is long since dead, Cousin Maria is for ever coming to the play-house. Tom Spencer has spied her out night after night in the gallery, and she comes on the night when Hagan performs. Quick, Burroughs, Mr. Warrington's boots and portmanteau! Order a chaise and four for Portsmouth immediately! The letter which I burned one morning when we were at breakfast (I may let the cat out of the bag, now puss has such a prodigious way to run) was from Cousin M., hinting that she wished me to tell no tales about her: but I can't help just whispering to you that Maria at this moment is busy consoling herself as fast as possible. Shall I spoil sport? Shall I tell her brother? Is the affair any business of mine? What have the Esmonds done for you and me but win our money at cards? Yet I like our noble cousin. It seems to me that he would be good if he could—or rather, he would have been once. He has been set on a wrong way of life, from which 'tis now probably too late to rescue him. *O beati agricolæ!* Our Virginia was dull, but let us thank Heaven we were bred there. We were made little slaves, but not slaves to wickedness, gambling, bad male and female company. It was not until my poor Harry left home that he fell among thieves. I mean thieves *en grand*, such as waylaid him and stripped him on English high-roads. I consider you none the worse because you were the unlucky one, and had to deliver your purse up. And now you are going to retrieve, and make a good name for yourself; and kill more 'French dragons,' and become a great

commander. And our mother will talk of her son the Captain, the Colonel, the General, and have his picture painted with all his stars and epaulets, when poor I shall be but a dawdling poetaster, or, if we may hope for the best, a snug placeman, with a little box at Richmond or Kew, and a half-score of little picaninies, that will come and bob curtseys at the garden-gate when their uncle the General rides up on his great charger, with his aide-de-camp's pockets filled with gingerbread for the nephews and nieces. 'Tis for you to brandish the sword of Mars. As for me I look forward to a quiet life: a quiet little home, a quiet little library full of books, and a little *Some one dulce ridentem, dulce loquentem*, on t' other side of the fire, as I scribble away at my papers. I am so pleased with this prospect, so utterly contented and happy, that I feel afraid as I think of it, lest it should escape me; and, even to my dearest Hal, am shy of speaking of my happiness. What is ambition to me, with this certainty? What do I care for wars, with this beatific peace smiling near?

"Our mother's friend, Mynheer Van den Bosch, has been away on a tour to discover his family in Holland, and, strange to say, has found one. Miss (who was intended by maternal solicitude to be a wife for your worship) has had six months at Kensington School, and is coming out with a hundred pretty accomplishments, which are to complete her a perfect fine lady. Her Papa brought her to make a curtsy in Dean Street, and a mighty elegant curtsy she made. Though she is scarce seventeen, no dowager of sixty can be more at her ease. She conversed with Aunt Lambert on an equal footing; she treated the girls as chits—to Hetty's wrath and Theo's amusement. She talked politics with the General, and the last routs, dresses, operas, fashions, scandal, with such perfect ease that, but for a blunder or two, you might have fancied Miss Lydia was born in Mayfair. At the Court end of the town she will live, she says; and has no patience with her father, who has a lodging in Monument Yard. For those who love a brown beauty, a prettier little *mignonne* creature cannot be seen. But my taste, you know, dearest brother, and"

Here follows a page of raptures and quotations of verse, which, out of a regard for the reader, and the writer's memory, the editor of the present pages declines to reprint. Gentlemen and ladies of a certain age may remember the time when they indulged in these rapturous follies on their own accounts; when the praises of the charmer were for ever warbling from their lips or trickling from their pens; when the flowers of life were in full bloom, and all the birds of spring were singing. The twigs are now bare, perhaps, and the leaves have fallen; but, for all that, shall we not remember the vernal time? As for you, young people, whose May (or April, is it?) has not commenced yet, you need not be detained over other folks' love-rhapsodies; depend on it, when your spring-season arrives, kindly Nature will warm all your flowers into bloom, and rouse your glad bosoms to pour out their full song.

CHAPTER XXI.

A LITTLE INNOCENT.



GEORGE WARRINGTON has mentioned in the letter just quoted, that in spite of my Lord Castlewood's previous play transactions with Harry, my lord and George remained friends, and met on terms of good kinsmanship. Did George want franks, or an introduction at Court, or a place in the House of Lords to hear a debate, his cousin was always ready to serve him, was a pleasant and witty companion, and would do anything which might promote his relative's interests, provided his own were not prejudiced.

Now he even went so far as to promise that he would do his best with the people in power to provide a place for Mr. George Warrington,

who daily showed a greater disinclination to return to his native country, and place himself once more under the maternal servitude. George had not merely a sentimental motive for remaining in England: the pursuits and society of London pleased him infinitely better than any which he could have at home. A planter's life of idleness might have suited him, could he have enjoyed independence with it. But in Virginia he was only the first, and, as he thought, the worst-treated, of his mother's subjects. He dreaded to think of returning with his young bride to his home, and of the life which she would be destined to lead there. Better freedom and poverty in England, with congenial society, and a hope perchance of future distinction, than the wearisome routine of home life, the tedious subordination, the frequent bickerings, the certain jealousies and differences of opinion, to which he must subject his wife so soon as they turned their faces homeward.

So Lord Castlewood's promise to provide for George was very eagerly

accepted by the Virginian. My lord had not provided very well for his own brother to be sure, and his own position, peer as he was, was anything but enviable; but we believe what we wish to believe, and George Warrington chose to put great stress upon his kinsman's offer of patronage. Unlike the Warrington family, Lord Castlewood was quite gracious when he was made acquainted with George's engagement to Miss Lambert; came to wait upon her parents; praised George to them and the young lady to George, and made himself so prodigiously agreeable in their company that these charitable folk forgot his bad reputation, and thought it must be a very wicked and scandalous world which maligned him. He said, indeed, that he was improved in their society, as every man must be who came into it. Among them he was witty, lively, good for the time being. He left his wickedness and worldliness with his cloak in the hall, and only put them on again when he stepped into his chair. What worldling on life's voyage does not know of some such harbour of rest and calm, some haven where he puts in out of the storm? Very likely Lord Castlewood was actually better whilst he stayed with those good people, and for the time being, at least no hypocrite.

And, I dare say, the Lambert elders thought no worse of his lordship for openly proclaiming his admiration for Miss Theo. It was quite genuine, and he did not profess it was very deep.

"It don't affect my sleep, and I am not going to break my heart because Miss Lambert prefers somebody else," he remarked. "Only I wish when I was a young man, Madam, I had had the good fortune to meet with somebody so innocent and good as your daughter. I might have been kept out of a deal of harm's way: but innocent and good young women did not fall into mine, or they would have made me better than I am."

"Sure, my lord, it is not too late!" says Mrs. Lambert, very softly.

Castlewood started back, misunderstanding her.

"Not too late, Madam?" he inquired.

She blushed. "It is too late to court my dear daughter," my lord, "but not too late to repent. We read, 'tis never too late to do that. If others have been received at the eleventh hour, is there any reason why you should give up hope?"

"Perhaps I know my own heart better than you," he says in a plaintive tone. "I can speak French and German very well, and why? because I was taught both in the nursery. A man who learns them late can never get the practice of them on his tongue. And so 'tis the case with goodness, I can't learn it at my age. I can only see others practice it, and admire them. When I am on—on the side opposite to Lazarus, will Miss Theo give me a drop of water? Don't frown! I know I shall be there, Mrs. Lambert. Some folks are doomed so; and I think some of our family are amongst these. Some people are vacillating, and one hardly knows which way the scale will turn. Whereas

some are predestined angels, and fly Heavenwards naturally, and do what they will."

"O, my lord, and why should you not be of the predestined? Whilst there is a day left—whilst there is an hour—there is hope!" says the fond matron.

"I know what is passing in your mind, my dear Madam—nay, I read your prayers in your looks; but how can they avail?" Lord Castlewood asked sadly. "You don't know all, my good lady. You don't know what a life ours is of the world; how early it began; how selfish Nature, and then necessity and education have made us. It is Fate holds the reins of the chariot, and we can't escape our doom. I know better: I see better people: I go my own way. My own? No, not mine—Fate's: and it is not altogether without pity for us, since it allows us, from time to time, to see such people as you." And he took her hand and looked her full in the face, and bowed with a melancholy grace. Every word he said was true. No greater error than to suppose that weak and bad men are strangers to good feelings, or deficient of sensibility. Only the good feeling does not last—nay, the tears are a kind of debauch of sentiment, as old libertines are said to find that the tears and grief of their victims add a zest to their pleasure. But Mrs. Lambert knew little of what was passing in this man's mind (how should she?), and so prayed for him with the fond persistence of woman. He was much better—yes, much better than he was supposed to be. He was a most interesting man. There were hopes, why should there not be the most precious hopes for him still?

It remains to be seen which of the two speakers formed the correct estimate of my lord's character. Meanwhile, if the gentleman was right, the lady was mollified, and her kind wishes and prayers for this experienced sinner's repentance, if they were of no avail for his amendment, at least could do him no harm. Kind souled doctors (and what good woman is not of the faculty?) look after a reprobate as physicians after a perilous case. When the patient is converted to health their interest ceases in him, and they drive to feel pulses and prescribe medicines elsewhere.

But, while the malady was under treatment, our kind lady could not see too much of her sick man. Quite an intimacy sprung up between my Lord Castlewood and the Lamberts. I am not sure that some worldly views might not suit even with good Mrs. Lambert's spiritual plans (for who knows into what pure Eden, though guarded by flaming-sworded angels, worldliness will not creep?). Her son was about to take orders. My Lord Castlewood feared very much that his present Chaplain's, Mr. Sampson's, careless life and heterodox conversations might lead him to give up his chaplaincy; in which case, my lord hinted the little modest cure would be vacant, and at the service of some young divine of good principles and good manners, who would be content with a small stipend, and a small but friendly congregation.

Thus an acquaintance was established between the two families,

and the ladies of Castlewood, always on their good behaviour, came more than once to make their curtsies in Mrs. Lambert's drawing-room. They were civil to the parents and the young ladies. My Lady Castlewood's card assemblies were open to Mrs. Lambert and her family. There was play, certainly—all the world played—his Majesty, the Bishops, every Peer and Peeress in the land. But nobody need play who did not like; and surely nobody need have scruples regarding the practice, when such august and venerable personages were daily found to abet it. More than once Mrs. Lambert made her appearance at her ladyship's routs, and was grateful for the welcome which she received, and pleased with the admiration which her daughters excited.

Mention has been made, in a foregoing page and letter, of an American family of Dutch extraction, who had come to England very strongly recommended by Madam Esmond, their Virginian neighbour, to her sons in Europe. The views expressed in Madam Esmond's letter were so clear, that that arch match-maker, Mrs. Lambert, could not but understand them. As for George, he was engaged already; as for poor Hetty's flame, Harry, he was gone on service, for which circumstance Hetty's mother was not very sorry perhaps. She laughingly told George that he ought to obey his Mamma's injunctions, break off his engagement with Theo, and make up to Miss Lydia, who was ten times—ten times! a hundred times as rich as her poor girl, and certainly much handsomer. "Yes, indeed," says George, "that I own: she is handsomer, and she is richer, and perhaps even cleverer." (All which praises Mrs. Lambert but half liked.) "But say she is all these? So is Mr. Johnson much cleverer than I am: so is, whom shall we say?—so is Mr. Hagan the actor much taller and handsomer: so is Sir James Lowther much richer: yet pray, Ma'am, do you suppose I am going to be jealous of any one of these three, or think my Theo would jilt me for their sakes? Why should I not allow that Miss Lydia is handsomer, then? and richer, and clever, too, and lively, and well bred, if you insist on it, and an angel if you will have it so? Theo is not afraid: art thou, child?"

"No, George," says Theo, with such an honest look of the eyes, as would convince any scepticism, or shame any jealousy. And if, after this pair of speeches, Mamma takes occasion to leave the room for a minute to fetch her scissors, or her thimble, or a boot-jack and slippers, or the cross and ball on the top of St. Paul's, or her pocket-handkerchief which she has forgotten in the parlour—if, I say, Mrs. Lambert quits the room on any errand or pretext, natural or preposterous, I shall not be in the least surprised, if, at her return in a couple of minutes, she finds George in near proximity to Theo, who has a heightened colour, and whose hand George is just dropping, I shall not have the least idea of what they have been doing. Have you, Madam? Have you any remembrance of what used to happen when Mr. Grundy came a courting? Are you, who, after all, were not in the room with our

young people, going to cry out fie and for shame? Then fie and for shame upon you, Mrs. Grundy!

Well, Harry being away, and Theo and George irrevocably engaged, so that there was no possibility of bringing Madam Esmond's little plans to bear, why should not Mrs. Lambert have plans of her own; and if a rich, handsome, beautiful little wife should fall in his way, why should not Jack Lambert from Oxford have her? So thinks Mamma, who was always thinking of marrying and giving in marriage, and so she prattles to General Lambert, who, as usual, calls her a goose for her pains. At any rate, Mrs. Lambert says beauty and riches are no objection; at any rate, Madam Esmond desired that this family should be hospitably entertained, and it was not her fault that Harry was gone away to Canada. Would the General wish him to come back; leave the army and his reputation, perhaps; yes, and come to England and marry this American, and break poor Hetty's heart—would her father wish that? Let us spare further arguments, and not be so rude as to hint that Mr. Lambert was in the right in calling a fond wife by the name of that absurd splay-footed bird, annually sacrificed at the Feast of St. Michael.

In those early days, there were vast distinctions of rank drawn between the Court and city people: and Mr. Van den Bosch, when he first came to London, scarcely associated with any but the latter sort. He had a lodging near his agent's in the city. When his pretty girl came from school for a holiday, he took her an airing to Islington or Highgate, or an occasional promenade in the Artillery Ground in Bunhill Fields. They went to that Baptist meeting-house in Finsbury Fields, and on the sly to see Mr. Garrick once or twice, or that funny rogue Mr. Foote, at the Little Theatre. To go to a Lord Mayor's feast was a treat to the gentleman of the highest order: and to dance with a young mercer at Hampstead Assembly gave the utmost delight to the young lady. When George first went to wait upon his mother's friends, he found our old acquaintance, Mr. Draper, of the Temple, sedulous in his attentions to her; and the lawyer, who was married, told Mr. Warrington to look out, as the young lady had a plumb to her fortune. Mr. Drabshaw, a young Quaker gentleman, and nephew of Mr. Trail, Madam Esmond's Bristol agent, was also in constant attendance upon the young lady, and in dreadful alarm and suspicion when Mr. Warrington first made his appearance. Wishing to do honour to his mother's neighbours, Mr. Warrington invited them to an entertainment at his own apartments; and who should so naturally meet them as his friends from Soho? Not one of them but was forced to own little Miss Lydia's beauty. She had the foot of a fairy; the arms, neck, flashing eyes of a little brown huntress of Diana. She had brought a little plaintive accent from home with her—of which I, *moi qui vous parle*, have heard a hundred gross Cockney imitations, and watched as many absurd disguises, and which I say (in moderation) is charming in the mouth of a charming woman.

Who sets up to say No, forsooth? You dear Miss Whittington, with whose h's fate has dealt so unkindly?—you lovely Miss Nicol Jarvie, with your northern burr?—you beautiful Miss Molony, with your Dame Street warble? All accents are pretty from pretty lips, and who shall set the standard up? Shall it be a rose, or a thistle, or a shamrock, or a star and stripe? As for Miss Lydia's accent, I have no doubt it was not odious even from the first day when she set foot on these polite shores, otherwise Mr. Warrington, as a man of taste, had certainly disapproved of her manner of talking, and her school-mistress at Kensington had not done her duty by her pupil.

After the six months were over, during which, according to her father's calculation, she was to learn all the accomplishments procurable at the Kensington Academy, Miss Lydia returned nothing loth to her grandfather, and took her place in the world. A narrow world at first it was to her; but she was a resolute little person, and resolved to enlarge her sphere in society; and whither she chose to lead the way, the obedient grandfather followed her. He had been thwarted himself in early life, he said, and little good came of the severity he underwent. He had thwarted his own son, who had turned out but ill. As for little Lyddy, he was determined she should have as pleasant a life as was possible. Did not Mr. George think he was right? 'Twas said in Virginia—he did not know with what reason—that the young gentlemen of Castlewood had been happier if Madam Esmond had allowed them a little of their own way. George could not gainsay this public rumour, or think of inducing the benevolent old gentleman to alter his plans respecting his grand-daughter. As for the Lambert family, how could they do otherwise than welcome the kind old man, the parent so tender and liberal, Madam Esmond's good friend?

When Miss came from school, grandpapa removed from Monument Yard to an elegant house in Bloomsbury; whither they were followed at first by their city friends. There were merchants from Virginia Walk; there were worthy tradesmen, with whom the worthy old merchant had dealings; there were their ladies and daughters and sons, who were all highly gracious to Miss Lyddy. It would be a long task to describe how these disappeared one by one—how there were no more junketings at Belsize, or trips to Highgate, or Saturday jaunts to Deputy Higgs' villa, Highbury, or country dances at honest Mr. Lute-string's house at Hackney. Even the Sunday practice was changed; and, O abomination of abominations! Mr. Van den Bosch left Bethesda Chapel in Bunhill Row, and actually took a pew in Queen Square Church!

Queen Square Church, and Mr. George Warrington lived hard by in Southampton Row! 'Twas easy to see at whom Miss Lyddy was setting her cap, and Mr. Draper, who had been full of her and her grandfather's praises before, now took occasion to warn Mr. George, and gave him very different reports regarding Mr. Van den

Bosch to those which had first been current. Mr. Van d. B., for all he bragged so of his Dutch parentage, came from Albany, and was nobody's son at all. He had made his money by land speculation, or by privateering (which was uncommonly like piracy), and by the Guinea trade. His son had married—if marriage it could be called, which was very doubtful—an assigned servant, and had been cut off by his father, and had taken to bad courses, and had died, luckily for himself, in his own bed.

"Mr. Draper has told you bad tales about me," said the placid old gentleman to George. "Very likely we are all sinners, and some evil may be truly said of all of us, with a great deal more that is untrue. Did he tell you that my son was unhappy with me? I told you so too. Did he bring you wicked stories about my family? He liked it so well that he wanted to marry my Lyddy to his brother. Heaven bless her! I have had a many offers for her. And you are the young gentleman I should have chose for her, and I like you none the worse because you prefer somebody else; though what you can see in your Miss, as compared to my Lyddy, begging your honour's pardon, I am at a loss to understand."

"There is no accounting for tastes, my good sir," said Mr. George, with his most superb air.

"No, sir; 'tis a wonder of nature, and daily happens. When I kept store to Albany, there was one of your tip-top gentry there that might have married my dear daughter that was alive then, and with a pretty piece of money, whereby—for her father and I had quarrelled—Miss Lyddy would have been a pauper, you see: and in place of my beautiful Bella, my gentleman chooses a little homely creature, no prettier than your Miss, and without a dollar to her fortune. The more fool he, saving your presence, Mr. George."

"Pray don't save my presence, my good sir," says George, laughing. "I suppose the gentleman's word was given to the other lady, and he had seen her first, and hence was indifferent to your charming daughter."

"I suppose when a young fellow gives his word to perform a cursed piece of folly, he always sticks to it, my dear sir, begging your pardon. But Lord, Lord, what am I speaking of? I am a speaking of twenty year ago. I was well-to-do then, but I may say Heaven has blessed my store, and I am three times as well off now. Ask my agents how much they will give for Joseph Van den Bosch's bill at six months on New York—or at sight may be—for forty thousand pound? I warrant they will discount the paper."

"Happy he who has the bill, sir!" says George, with a bow, not a little amused with the candour of the old gentleman.

"Lord, Lord, how mercenary you young men are!" cries the elder, simply. "Always thinking about money now-a-days! Happy he who has the girl, I should say—the money ain't the question, my dear sir, when it goes along with such a lovely young thing as that—though I

humbly say it, who oughn't, and who am her fond silly old grandfather. We were talking about you, Lyddy darling—come, give me a kiss, my blessing! We were talking about you, and Mr. George said he wouldn't take you with all the money your poor old grandfather can give you."

"Nay, sir," says George.

"Well, you are right to say nay, for I didn't say all, that's the truth. My Blessing will have a deal more than that trifle I spoke of, when it shall please Heaven to remove me out of this world to a better—when poor old Gappy is gone, Lyddy will be a rich little Lyddy, that she will. But she don't wish me to go yet, does she?"

"O you darling dear grandpapa!" says Lyddy.

"This young gentleman won't have you. (Lyddy looks an arch 'thank you, sir,' from her brown eyes.) But at any rate he is honest, and that is more than we can say of some folks in this wicked London. O Lord, Lord, how mercenary they are! Do you know that yonder, in Monument Yard, they were all at my poor little Blessing for her money? There was Tom Lutestring; there was Mr. Draper, your precious lawyer; there was actually Mr. Tubbs, of Bethesda Chapel; and they must all come buzzing like flies round the honey-pot. That is why we came out of the quarter, where my brother tradesmen live."

"To avoid the flies, to be sure!" says Miss Lydia, tossing up her little head.

"Where my brother tradesmen live," continues the old gentleman. "Else who am I to think of consorting with your grandees and fine folk? I don't care for the fashions, Mr. George; I don't care for plays and poetry, begging your honour's pardon; I never went to a play in my life, but to please this little minx."

"O, sir, 'twas lovely! and I cried so, didn't I, grandpapa?" says the child.

"At what, my dear?"

"At—at Mr. Warrington's play, grandpapa."

"Did you, my dear? I daresay; I daresay! It was mail day: and my letters had come in: and my ship the 'Lovely Lyddy' had just come into Falmouth; and Captain Joyce reported how he had mercifully escaped a French privateer; and my head was so full of thanks for that escape, which saved me a deal of money, Mr. George—for the rate at which ships is underwrote this war-time is so scandalous that I often prefer to venture than to insure—that I confess I didn't listen much to the play, sir, and only went to please this little Lyddy."

"And you *did* please me, dearest Gappy!" cries the young lady.

"Bless you! then it's all I want. What does a man want more here below than to please his children, Mr. George? especially me, who knew what was to be unhappy when I was young, and to repent of having treated this darling's father too hard."

"O grandpapa!" cries the child, with more caresses.

"Yes, I *was* too hard with him, dear; and that's why I spoil my little Lydkin so!"

More kisses ensue between Lyddy and Gappy. The little creature flings the pretty polished arms round the old man's neck, presses the dark red lips on his withered cheek, surrounds the venerable head with a halo of powder beaten out of his wig by her caresses; and eyes Mr. George the while, as much as to say, There, sir! should you not like me to do as much for you?

We confess;—but do we confess all? George certainly told the story of his interview with Lyddy and Gappy, and the old man's news regarding his grand-daughter's wealth; but I don't think he told everything; else Theo would scarce have been so much interested, or so entirely amused and good-humoured with Lyddy when next the two young ladies met.

They met now pretty frequently, especially after the old American gentleman took up his residence in Bloomsbury. Mr. Van den Bosch was in the city for the most part of the day, attending to his affairs, and appearing at his place upon 'Change. During his absence Lyddy had the command of the house, and received her guests there like a lady, or rode abroad in a fine coach, which she ordered her grandpapa to keep for her, and into which he could very seldom be induced to set his foot. Before long Miss Lyddy was as easy in the coach as if she had ridden in one all her life. She ordered the domestics here and there; she drove to the mercer's and the jeweller's, and she called upon her friends with the utmost stateliness, or rode abroad with them to take the air. Theo and Hetty were both greatly diverted with her: but would the elder have been quite as well pleased had she known all Miss Lyddy's doings? Not that Theo was of a jealous disposition,—far otherwise; but there are cases when a lady has a right to a little jealousy, as I maintain, whatever my fair readers may say to the contrary.

It was because she knew he was engaged, very likely, that Miss Lyddy permitted herself to speak so frankly in Mr. George's praise. When they were alone—and this blessed chance occurred pretty often at Mr. Van den Bosch's house, for we have said he was constantly absent on one errand or the other—it was wonderful how artlessly the little creature would show her enthusiasm, asking him all sorts of simple questions about himself, his genius, his way of life at home and in London, his projects of marriage, and so forth.

"I am glad you are going to be married, O so glad!" she would say, heaving the most piteous sigh the while, "for I can talk to you frankly, quite frankly as a brother, and not be afraid of that odious politeness about which they were always scolding me at boarding-school. I may speak to you frankly; and if I like you, I may say so, mayn't I, Mr. George?"

"Pray, say so," says George, with a bow and a smile. "That is

a kind of talk which most men delight to hear, especially from such pretty lips as Miss Lydia's."

"What do you know about my lips?" says the girl, with a pout and an innocent look into his face.

"What, indeed?" asks George. "Perhaps I should like to know a great deal more."

"They don't tell nothin' but truth, any how!" says the girl; "that's why some people don't like them! If I have anything on my mind, it must come out. I am a country-bred girl, I am—with my heart in my mouth—all honesty and simplicity; not like your English girls, who have learned I don't know what at their boarding-schools, and from the men afterwards."

"Our girls are monstrous little hypocrites, indeed!" cries George.

"You are thinking of Miss Lamberts? and I might have thought of them; but I declare I did not then. They have been at boarding-school; they have been in the world a great deal—so much the greater pity for them, for be certain they learned no good there. And now I have said so, of course you will go and tell Miss Theo, won't you, sir?"

"That she has learned no good in the world? She has scarce spoken to men at all, except her father, her brother, and me. Which of us would teach her any wrong, think you?"

"O, not you! Though I can understand its being very dangerous to be with you!" says the girl, with a sigh.

"Indeed there is no danger, and I don't bite!" says George, laughing.

"I didn't say bite," says the girl, softly. "There's other things dangerous besides biting, I should think. Aren't you very witty? Yes, and sarcastic, and clever, and always laughing at people? Haven't you a coaxing tongue? If you was to look at me in that kind of way, I don't know what would come to me. Was your brother like you, as I was to have married? Was he as clever and witty as you? I have heard he was like you: but he hadn't your coaxing tongue. Heigho! 'Tis well you are engaged, Master George, that is all. Do you think if you had seen me first, you would have liked Miss Theo best?"

"They say marriages were made in Heaven, my dear, and let us trust that mine has been arranged there," says George.

"I suppose there was no such thing never known, as a man having two sweethearts?" asks the artless little maiden. "Guess it's a pity. O me! What nonsense I'm a-talking; there now! I'm like the little girl who cried for the moon; and I can't have it. 'Tis too high for me—too high and splendid and shining: can't reach up to it nohow. Well, what a foolish, wayward, little spoilt thing I am now! But one thing you promise—on your word and your honour, now, Mr. George?"

"And what is that?"

"That you won't tell Miss Theo, else she'll hate me."

"Why should she hate you?"

"Because I hate her, and wish she was dead!" breaks out the young lady. And the eyes that were looking so gentle and lachrymose but now, flame with sudden wrath, and her cheeks flush up. "For shame!" she adds, after a pause. "I'm a little fool to speak! But whatever is in my heart must come out. I am a girl of the woods, I am. I was bred where the sun is hotter than in this foggy climate. And I am not like your cold English girls; who, before they speak, or think, or feel, must wait for Mamma to give leave. There, there! I may be a little fool for saying what I have. I know you'll go and tell Miss Lambert. Well, do!"

But, as we have said, George didn't tell Miss Lambert. Even from the beloved person there must be some things kept secret; even to himself, perhaps, he did not quite acknowledge what was the meaning of the little girl's confession; or, if he acknowledged it, did not act on it; except in so far as this, perhaps, that my gentleman, in Miss Lydia's presence, was particularly courteous and tender; and in her absence thought of her very kindly, and always with a certain pleasure. It were hard, indeed, if a man might not repay by a little kindness and gratitude the artless affection of such a warm young heart.

What was that story meanwhile which came round to our friends, of young Mr. Lutestring and young Mr. Drabshaw the Quaker having a boxing-match at a tavern in the city, and all about this young lady? They fell out over their cups, and fought probably. Why did Mr. Draper, who had praised her so at first, tell such stories now against her grandfather? "I suspect," says Madame de Bernstein, "that he wants the girl for some client or relation of his own; and that he tells these tales in order to frighten all suitors from her. When she and her grandfather came to me, she behaved perfectly well; and I confess, sir, I thought it was a great pity that you should prefer yonder red-cheeked countryfied little chit, without a halfpenny, to this pretty, wild, artless girl, with such a fortune as I hear she has."

"O, she has been with you, has she, aunt?" asks George of his relative.

"Of course she has been with me," the other replies, curtly. "Unless your brother has been so silly as to fall in love with that other little Lambert girl——"

"Indeed, Ma'am. I think I can say he has not," George remarks.

"Why, then, when he comes back with Mr. Wolfe, should he not take a fancy to this little person, as his Mamma wishes—only, to do us justice, we Esmonds care very little for what our Mammams wish—and marry her, and set up beside you in Virginia? She is to have a great fortune, which you won't touch. Pray, why should it go out of the family?"

George now learned that Mr. Van den Bosch and his grand-daughter had been often at Madame de Bernstein's house. Taking his favourite walk with his favourite companion to Kensington Gardens, he saw Mr. Van

den Bosch's chariot turning into Kensington Square. The Americans were going to visit Lady Castlewood then? He found, on some little inquiry, that they had been more than once with her ladyship. It was, perhaps, strange that they should have said nothing of their visits to George; but, being little curious of other people's affairs, and having no intrigues or mysteries of his own, George was quite slow to imagine them in other people. What mattered to him how often Kensington entertained Bloomsbury, or Bloomsbury made its bow at Kensington?

A number of things were happening at both places, of which our Virginian had not the slightest idea. Indeed, do not things happen under our eyes, and we not see them? Are not comedies and tragedies daily performed before us of which we understand neither the fun nor the pathos? Very likely George goes home thinking to himself, "I have made an impression on the heart of this young creature. She has almost confessed as much. Poor artless little maiden! I wonder what there is in me that she should like me?" Can he be angry with her for this unlucky preference? Was ever a man angry at such a reason? He would not have been so well pleased, perhaps, had he known all; and that he was only one of the performers in the comedy, not the principal character by any means; Rosenkrantz and Gildenstern in the Tragedy, the part of Hamlet by a gentleman unknown. How often are our little vanities shocked in this way, and subjected to wholesome humiliation! Have you not fancied that Lucinda's eyes beamed on you with a special tenderness, and presently become aware that she ogles your neighbour with the very same killing glances? Have you not exchanged exquisite whispers with Lalage at the dinner-table (sweet murmurs heard through the hum of the guests, and clatter of the banquet!) and then overheard her whispering the very same delicious phrases to old Surdus in the drawing-room? The sun shines for everybody; the flowers smell sweet for all noses; and the nightingale and Lalage warble for all ears—not your long ones only, good Brother!

CHAPTER XXII.

IN WHICH CUPID PLAYS A CONSIDERABLE PART.



E must now, however, and before we proceed with the history of Miss Lydia and her doings, perform the duty of explaining that sentence in Mr. Warrington's letter to his brother which refers to Lady Maria Esmond, and which, to some simple readers, may be still mysterious. For how, indeed, could well-regulated persons divine such a secret? How could innocent and respectable young people suppose that a woman of noble birth, of ancient family, of mature experience,—a woman whom we have seen exceedingly in love only a score of months ago,—should so far forget herself as (O, my very finger-tips blush as I write the sentence!),—as not only to fall in love with a person of low origin,

and very many years her junior, but actually to marry him in the face of the world? That is, not exactly in the face, but behind the back of the world, so to speak; for Parson Sampson privily tied the indissoluble knot for the pair at his chapel in May Fair.

Now stop before you condemn her utterly. Because Lady Maria had had, and overcome, a foolish partiality for her young cousin, was that any reason why she should never fall in love with anybody else? Are men to have the sole privilege of change, and are women to be rebuked for availing themselves now and again of their little chance of consolation? No invectives can be more rude, gross, and unphilosophical than, for instance, Hamlet's to his mother about her second marriage. The truth, very likely, is, that that tender, parasitic creature wanted a something to cling to, and, Hamlet senior out of the way, twined herself round Claudius. Nay, we have known females so

bent on attaching themselves, that they can twine round two gentlemen at once. Why, forsooth, shall there not be marriage-tables after funeral baked-meats? If you said grace for your feast yesterday, is that any reason why you shall not be hungry to-day? Your natural fine appetite and relish for this evening's feast, shows that to-morrow evening at eight o'clock you will most probably be in want of your dinner. I, for my part, when Flirtilla or Jiltissa were partial to me (the kind reader will please to fancy that I am alluding here to persons of the most ravishing beauty and lofty rank), always used to bear in mind that a time would come when they would be fond of somebody else. We are served *à la Russe*, and gobbled up a dish at a time, like the folks in Polyphemus's cave. 'Tis *hodie mihi, cras tibi*: there are some Anthropophagi who devour dozens of us,—the old, the young, the tender, the tough, the plump, the lean, the ugly, the beautiful: there's no escape, and one after another, as our fate is, we disappear down their omnivorous maws. Look at Lady Ogresham! We all remember, last year, how she served poor Tom Kydd: seized upon him, devoured him, picked his bones, and flung them away. Now it is Ned Suckling she has got into her den. He lies under her great eyes, quivering and fascinated. Look at the poor little trepid creature, panting and helpless under the great eyes! She trails towards him nearer and nearer; he draws to her, closer and closer. Presently, there will be one or two feeble squeaks for pity, and—hobblegobble—he will disappear! Ah me! it is pity, too. I knew, for instance, that Maria Esmond had lost her heart ever so many times before Harry Warrington found it; but I liked to fancy that he was going to keep it; that, bewailing mischance and times out of joint, she would yet have preserved her love, and fondled it in decorous celibacy. If, in some paroxysm of senile folly, I should fall in love to-morrow, I shall still try and think I have acquired the fee-simple of my charmer's heart;—not that I am only a tenant, on a short lease, of an old battered furnished apartment, where the dingy old wine-glasses have been clouded by scores of pairs of lips, and the tumbled old sofas are muddy with the last lodger's boots. Dear, dear nymph! Being beloved and beautiful! Suppose I had a little passing passion for Glycera (and her complexion really was as pure as splendid Parian marble); suppose you had a fancy for Telephus, and his low collars and absurd neck;—those follies are all over now, aren't they? We love each other for good now, don't we? Yes, for ever; and Glycera may go to Bath, and Telephus take his *cervicem roseam* to Jack Ketch, *n'est-ce pas?*

No. We never think of changing, my dear. However winds blow, or time flies, or spoons stir, *our* potage, which is now so piping hot, will never get cold. Passing fancies we may have allowed ourselves in former days; and really your infatuation for Telephus (don't frown so, my darling creature! and make the wrinkles in your forehead worse)—I say, really it was the talk of the whole town; and as for Glycera, she behaved confoundedly ill to me. Well, well, now that we

understand each other, it is for ever that our hearts are united, and we can look at Sir Cresswell Cresswell, and snap our fingers at his wig. But this Maria of the last century was a woman of an ill-regulated mind. You, my love, who know the world, know that in the course of this lady's career a great deal must have passed that would not bear the light, or edify in the telling. You know (not, my dear creature, that I mean you have any experience; but you have heard people say—you have heard your mother say) that an old flirt, when she has done playing the fool with one passion, will play the fool with another; that flirting is like drinking; and the brandy being drunk up, you—no, not you—Glycera—the brandy being drunk up, Glycera, who has taken to drinking, will fall upon the gin. So, if Maria Esmond has found a successor for Harry Warrington, and set up a new sultan in the precious empire of her heart, what, after all, could you expect from her? That territory was like the Low Countries, accustomed to being conquered, and for ever open to invasion.

And Maria's present enslaver was no other than Mr. Geoghegan or Hagan, the young actor who had performed in George's Tragedy. His tones were so thrilling, his eye so bright, his mien so noble, he looked so beautiful in his gilt leather armour and large buckled periwig, giving utterance to the poet's glowing verses, that the lady's heart was yielded up to him, even as Ariadne's to Bacchus when her affair with Theseus was over. The young Irishman was not a little touched and elated by the high-born damsel's partiality for him. He might have preferred a Lady Maria Hagan more tender in years, but one more tender in disposition it were difficult to discover. She clung to him closely, indeed. She retired to his humble lodgings in Westminster with him, when it became necessary to disclose their marriage, and when her furious relative disowned her.

General Lambert brought the news home from his office in Whitehall one day, and made merry over it with his family. In those homely times a joke was none the worse for being a little broad; and a fine lady would laugh at a jolly page of Fielding, and weep over a letter of Clarissa, which would make your present ladyship's eyes start out of your head with horror. He uttered all sorts of waggeries, did the merry General, upon the subject of this marriage; upon George's share in bringing it about; upon Harry's jealousy when he should hear of it. He vowed it was cruel that Cousin Hagan had not selected George as groomsman; that the first child should be called Carpezan or Sybilla, after the Tragedy, and so forth. They would not quite be able to keep a coach, but they might get a chariot and pasteboard dragons from Mr. Rich's theatre. The baby might be christened in Macbeth's cauldron: and Harry and harlequin ought certainly to be godfathers.

"Why shouldn't she marry him if she likes him?" asked little Hetty. "Why should he not love her because she is a little old? Mamma is a little old, and you love her none the worse. When you

married my Mamma, sir, I have heard you say you were very poor ; and yet you were very happy, and nobody laughed at you !” Thus this impudent little person spoke by reason of her tender age, not being aware of Lady Maria Esmond’s previous follies.

So her family has deserted her ? George described what wrath they were in ; how Lady Castlewood had gone into mourning ; how Mr. Will swore he would have the rascal’s ears ; how furious Madame de Bernstein was, the most angry of all. “ It is an insult to the family,” says haughty little Miss Hett ; “ and I can fancy how ladies of that rank must be indignant at their relative’s marriage with a person of Mr. Hagan’s condition ; but to desert her is a very different matter.”

“ Indeed, my dear child,” cries Mamma, “ you are talking of what you don’t understand. After my Lady Maria’s conduct, no respectable person can go to see her.”

“ What conduct, Mamma ?”

“ Never mind,” cries Mamma. “ Little girls can’t be expected to know, and ought not to be too curious to inquire, what Lady Maria’s conduct has been ! Suffice it, miss, that I am shocked her ladyship should ever have been here ; and I say again, no honest person should associate with her !”

“ Then, Aunt Lambert, I must be whipped and sent to bed,” says George, with mock gravity. “ I own to you (though I did not confess sooner, seeing that the affair was not mine) that I have been to see my cousin the player, and her ladyship his wife. I found them in very dirty lodgings in Westminster, where the wretch has the shabbiness to keep not only his wife, but his old mother, and a little brother, whom he puts to school. I found Mr. Hagan, and came away with a liking, and almost a respect for him, although I own he has made a very improvident marriage. But how improvident some folks are about marriage, aren’t they, Theo ?”

“ Improvident, if they marry such spendthrifts as you,” says the General. “ Master George found his relations, and I’ll be bound to say he left his purse behind him.”

“ No, not the purse, sir,” says George, smiling very tenderly. “ Theo made that. But I am bound to own it came empty away. Mr. Rich is in great dudgeon. He says he hardly dares have Hagan on his stage, and is afraid of a riot, such as Mr. Garrick had about the foreign dancers. This is to be a fine gentleman’s riot. The Macaronis are furious, and vow they will pelt Mr. Hagan, and have him cudgelled afterwards. My cousin Will, at Arthur’s, has taken his oath he will have the actor’s ears. Meanwhile, as the poor man does not play, they have cut off his salary ; and without his salary, this luckless pair of lovers have no means to buy bread and cheese.”

“ And you took it to them, sir ? It was like you, George !” says Theo, worshipping him with her eyes.

“ It was your purse took it, dear Theo !” replies George.

"Mamma, I hope you will go and see them to-morrow!" prays Theo.

"If she doesn't, I shall get a divorce, my dear!" cries Papa.

"Come and kiss me, you little wench—that is, *avec la bonne permission de Monsieur mon beau-fils.*"

"Monsieur mon beau fiddlestick, Papa!" says Miss Lambert, and I have no doubt complies with the paternal orders. And this was the first time George Esmond Warrington, Esquire, was ever called a fiddlestick.

Any man, even in our time, who makes an imprudent marriage, knows how he has to run the gauntlet of the family, and undergo the abuse, the scorn, the wrath, the pity of his relations. If your respectable family cry out because you marry the curate's daughter, one in ten, let us say, of his charming children; or because you engage yourself to the young barrister whose only present pecuniary resources come from the court which he reports, and who will have to pay his Oxford bills out of your slender little fortune;—if your friends cry out for making such engagements as these, fancy the feelings of Lady Maria Hagan's friends, and even those of Mr. Hagan's, on the announcement of this marriage.

There is old Mrs. Hagan, in the first instance. Her son has kept her dutifully and in tolerable comfort, ever since he left Trinity College at his father's death, and appeared as Romeo at Crow Street Theatre. His salary has sufficed of late years to keep the brother at school, to help the sister who has gone out as companion, and to provide fire, clothing, tea, dinner, and comfort for the old clergyman's widow. And now, forsooth, a fine lady with all sorts of extravagant habits, must come and take possession of the humble home, and share the scanty loaf and mutton! Were Hagan not a high-spirited fellow, and the old mother very much afraid of him, I doubt whether my lady's life at the Westminster lodgings would be very comfortable. It *was* very selfish perhaps to take a place at that small table, and in poor Hagan's narrow bed. But Love in some passionate and romantic dispositions never regards consequences, or measures accommodation. Who has not experienced that frame of mind; what thrifty wife has not seen and lamented her husband in that condition; when with rather a heightened colour and a deuce-may-care smile on his face, he comes home and announces that he has asked twenty people to dinner next Saturday? He doesn't know whom exactly; and he does know the dining-room will only hold sixteen. Never mind! Two of the prettiest girls can sit upon young gentlemen's knees: others won't come: there's sure to be plenty! In the intoxication of love people venture upon this dangerous sort of house-keeping; they don't calculate the resources of their dining table, or those inevitable butchers' and fishmongers' bills, which will be brought to the ghastly housekeeper at the beginning of the month.

Yes. It was rather selfish of my Lady Maria to seat herself at Hagan's table and take the cream off the milk, and the wings of the

chickens, and the best half of everything where there was only enough before; and no wonder the poor old mamma-in-law was disposed to grumble. But what was her outcry compared to the clamour at Kensington among Lady Maria's noble family? Think of the talk and scandal all over the town! Think of the titters and whispers of the ladies in attendance at the Princess's court, where Lady Fanny had a place; of the jokes of Mr. Will's brother-officers at the usher's table; of the waggeries in the daily prints and magazines; of the comments of the outraged prudes; of the laughter of the clubs and the sneers of the ungodly! At the receipt of the news Madame Bernstein had fits and ran off to the solitude of her dear rocks at Tunbridge Wells, where she did not see above forty people of a night at cards. My lord refused to see his sister; and the Countess in mourning, as we have said, waited upon one of her patronesses, a gracious princess, who was pleased to condole with her upon the disgrace and calamity which had befallen her house. For one, two, three whole days the town was excited and amused by the scandal; then there came other news—a victory in Germany; doubtful accounts from America; a general officer coming home to take his trial; an exquisite new soprano singer from Italy; and the public forgot Lady Maria in her garret, eating the hard-earned meal of the actor's family.

This is an extract from Mr. George Warrington's letter to his brother, in which he describes other personal matters, as well as a visit he had paid to the newly-married pair:

"My dearest little Theo," he writes, "was eager to accompany her Mamma upon this errand of charity; but I thought Aunt Lambert's visit would be best under the circumstances, and without the attendance of her little spinster *aide-de-camp*. Cousin Hagan was out when we called; we found her ladyship in a loose undress, and with her hair in not the neatest papers, playing at cribbage with a neighbour from the second-floor, while good Mrs. Hagan sate on the other side of the fire with a glass of punch, and the Whole Duty of Man.

"Maria, your Maria once, cried a little when she saw us; and Aunt Lambert, you may be sure, was ready with her sympathy. While she bestowed it on Lady Maria, I paid the best compliments I could invent to the old lady. When the conversation between Aunt L. and the bride began to flag, I turned to the latter, and between us we did our best to make a dreary interview pleasant. Our talk was about you, about Wolfe, about war; you must be engaged face to face with the Frenchmen by this time, and God send my dearest brother safe and victorious out of the battle! Be sure we follow your steps anxiously—we fancy you at Cape Breton. We have plans of Quebec, and charts of the St. Lawrence. Shall I ever forget your face of joy that day when you saw me return safe and sound from the little combat with the little Frenchman? So will my Harry, I know, return from his battle. I feel quite assured of it; elated somehow with the prospect of your certain success and safety. And I have made all here share my

cheerfulness. We talk of the campaign as over, and Captain Warrington's promotion as secure. Pray Heaven, all our hopes may be fulfilled one day ere long.

"How strange it is that you who are the mettlesome fellow (you know you are) should escape quarrels hitherto, and I, who am a peaceful youth, wishing no harm to anybody, should have battles thrust upon me! What do you think actually of my having had another affair upon my wicked hands, and with whom think you? With no less a personage than your old enemy our kinsman, Mr. Will.

"What or who set him to quarrel with me, I cannot think. Spencer (who acted as second for me, for matters actually have gone this length; —don't be frightened; it is all over, and nobody is a scratch the worse) thinks some one set Will on me, but who, I say? His conduct has been most singular; his behaviour quite unbearable. We have met pretty frequently lately at the house of good Mr. Van den Bosch, whose pretty grand-daughter was consigned to both of us by our good mother. O, dear mother! did you know that the little thing was to be such a *causa belli*, and to cause swords to be drawn, and precious lives to be menaced? But so it has been. To show his own spirit, I suppose, or having some reasonable doubt about mine, whenever Will and I have met at Mynheer's house—and he is for ever going there—he has shown such downright rudeness to me, that I have required more than ordinary patience to keep my temper. He has contradicted me once, twice, thrice, in the presence of the family, and out of sheer spite and rage, as it appeared to me. Is he paying his addresses to Miss Lydia, and her father's ships, negroes, and forty thousand pounds? I should guess so. The old gentleman is for ever talking about his money, and adores his grand-daughter, and as she is a beautiful little creature, numbers of folk here are ready to adore her too. Was Will rascal enough to fancy that I would give up my Theo for a million of guineas, and negroes, and Venus to boot? Could the thought of such baseness enter into the man's mind? I don't know that he has accused me of stealing Van den Bosch's spoons and tankards when we dine there, or of robbing on the highway. But for one reason or the other he has chosen to be jealous of me, and as I have parried his impertinences with little sarcastic speeches (though perfectly civil before company), perhaps I have once or twice made him angry. Our little Miss Lydia has unwittingly added fuel to the fire on more than one occasion, especially yesterday, when there was talk about your worship.

"Ah!" says the heedless little thing, as we sat over our dessert, 'tis lucky for you, Mr. Esmond, that Captain Harry is not here.'

"Why, miss?" asks he, with one of his usual conversational ornaments. He must have offended some fairy in his youth, who has caused him to drop curses for ever out of his mouth, as she did the girl to spit out toads and serpents. (I know some one from whose gentle lips there only fall pure pearls and diamonds.) 'Why?' says Will, with a cannonade of oaths.

"O fie!" says she, putting up the prettiest little fingers to the prettiest little rosy ears in the world. "O fie, sir! to use such naughty words. 'Tis lucky the Captain is not here, because he might quarrel with you; and Mr. George is so peaceable and quiet, that he won't. Have you heard from the Captain, Mr. George?"

"From Cape Breton," says I. "He is very well, thank you; that is—" I couldn't finish the sentence, for I was in such a rage, that I scarce could contain myself.

"From the Captain, as you call him, Miss Lyddy," says Will. "He'll distinguish himself as he did at Saint Cas! Ho, ho!"

"So I apprehend he did, sir," says Will's brother.

"Did he?" says our dear cousin; "always thought he ran away; took to his legs; got a ducking, and ran away as if a bailiff was after him."

"La!" says miss, "did the Captain ever have a bailiff after him?"

"Didn't he! Ho, ho!" laughs Mr. Will.

"I suppose I must have looked very savage, for Spencer, who was dining with us, trod on my foot under the table. 'Don't laugh so loud, cousin,' I said, very gently; 'you may wake good old Mr. Van den Bosch.' The good old gentleman was asleep in his arm-chair, to which he commonly retires for a nap after dinner.

"O, indeed! cousin," says Will, and he turned and winks at a friend of his, Captain Deuceace, whose own and whose wife's reputation I daresay you heard of when you frequented the clubs, and whom Will has introduced into this simple family as a man of the highest fashion. "Don't be afraid, miss," says Mr. Will, "nor my cousin needn't be."

"O what a comfort!" cries Miss Lyddy. "Keep quite quiet, gentlemen, and don't quarrel, and come up to me when I send to say the tea is ready." And with this she makes a sweet little curtsy, and disappears.

"Hang it, Jack, pass the bottle, and don't wake the old gentleman!" continues Mr. Will. "Won't you help yourself, cousin?" he continues; being particularly facetious in the tone of that word cousin.

"I am going to help myself," I said, "but I am not going to drink the glass; and I'll tell you what I am going to do with it, if you will be quite quiet, cousin!" (Desperate kicks from Spencer all this time.)

"And what the deuce do I care what you are going to do with it?" asks Will, looking rather white.

"I am going to fling it into your face, cousin," says I, very rapidly performing that feat.

"By Jove, and no mistake!" cries Mr. Deuceace; and as he and William roared out an oath together, good old Van den Bosch woke up, and, taking the pocket-handkerchief off his face, asked what was the matter.

"I remarked it was only a glass of wine gone the wrong way: and the old man said. 'Well, well, there is more where that came from!'"

Let the butler bring you what you please, young gentlemen !' and he sank back in his great chair, and began to sleep again.

" ' From the back of Montagu House Gardens there is a beautiful view of Hampstead at six o'clock in the morning ; and the statue of the King on St. George's Church, is reckoned elegant, cousin !' says I, resuming the conversation.

" ' D—the statue !' begins Will : but I said, ' Don't, cousin ! or you will wake up the old gentleman. Had we not best go up-stairs to Miss Lyddy's tea-table ?'

" We arranged a little meeting for the next morning ; and a coroner might have been sitting upon one or other, or both, of our bodies this afternoon ; but, would you believe it ? just as our engagement was about to take place, we were interrupted by three of Sir John Fielding's men, and carried to Bow Street, and ignominiously bound over to keep the peace.

" Who gave the information ? Not I, or Spencer, I can vow. Though I own I was pleased when the constables came running to us, bludgeon in hand : for I had no wish to take Will's blood, or sacrifice my own to such a rascal. Now, sir, have you such a battle as this to describe to me ?—a battle of powder and no shot ?—a battle of swords as bloody as any on the stage ? I have filled my paper, without finishing the story of Maria and her Hagan. You must have it by the next ship. You see, the quarrel with Will took place yesterday, very soon after I had written the first sentence or two of my letter. I had been dawdling till dinner time (I looked at the paper last night, when I was grimly making certain little accounts up, and wondered shall I ever finish this letter ?), and now the quarrel has been so much more interesting to me than poor Molly's love adventures, that behold my paper is full to the brim ! Wherever my dearest Harry reads it, I know there will be a heart full of love for

" His loving brother,

" G. E. W."

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHITE FAVOURS.



HE little quarrel between George and his cousin caused the former to discontinue his visits to Bloomsbury in a great measure; for Mr. Will was more than ever assiduous in his attentions; and, now that both were bound over to peace, so outrageous in his behaviour, that George found the greatest difficulty in keeping his hands from his cousin. The artless little Lydia had certainly a queer way of receiving her friends. But six weeks before madly jealous of George's preference for another, she now took occasion repeatedly to compliment Theo in her

conversation. Miss Theo was such a quiet, gentle creature, Lyddy was sure George was just the husband for her. How fortunate that horrible quarrel had been prevented! The constables had come up just in time; and it was quite ridiculous to hear Mr. Esmond cursing and swearing, and the rage he was in at being disappointed of his duel! "But the arrival of the constables saved your valuable life, dear Mr. George, and I am sure Miss Theo ought to bless them for ever," says Lyddy, with a soft smile. "You won't stop and meet Mr. Esmond at dinner to-day? You don't like being in his company? He can't do you any harm; and I am sure you will do him none." Kind speeches like these, addressed by a little girl to a gentleman, and spoken by a strange inadvertency in company, and when other gentlemen and ladies were present, were not likely to render Mr. Warrington very eager for the society of the young American lady.

George's meeting with Mr. Will was not known for some days in

Dean Street, for he did not wish to disturb those kind folks with his quarrel; but when the ladies were made aware of it, you may be sure there was a great flurry and to do. "You were actually going to take a fellow-creature's life, and you came to see us, and said not a word! O, George, it was shocking!" said Theo.

"My dear, he had insulted me and my brother," pleaded George. "Could I let him call us both cowards, and sit by and say, Thank you?"

The General sate by and looked very grave.

"You know you think, Papa, it is a wicked and un-Christian practice; and have often said you wished gentlemen would have the courage to refuse!"

"To refuse? Yes," says Mr. Lambert, still very glum.

"It must require a prodigious strength of mind to refuse," says Jack Lambert, looking as gloomy as his father; "and I think if any man were to call me a coward, I should be apt to forget my orders."

"You see brother Jack is with me!" cries George.

"I must not be against you, Mr. Warrington," says Jack Lambert.

"Mr. Warrington!" cries George, turning very red.

"Would you, a clergyman, have George break the Commandments, and commit murder, John?" asks Theo, aghast.

"I am a soldier's son, sister," says the young divine, drily. "Besides, Mr. Warrington has committed no murder at all. We must soon be hearing from Canada, father. The great question of the supremacy of the two races must be tried there ere long!" He turned his back on George as he spoke, and the latter eyed him with wonder.

Hetty, looking rather pale at this original remark of brother Jack, is called out of the room by some artful pretext of her sister. George started up and followed the retreating girls to the door.

"Great powers, gentlemen!" says he, coming back, "I believe, on my honour, you are giving me the credit of shirking this affair with Mr. Esmond!" The clergyman and his father looked at one another.

"A man's nearest and dearest are always the first to insult him," says George, flashing out.

"You mean to say, 'Not guilty?' God bless thee, my boy!" cries the General. "I told thee so, Jack." And he rubbed his hand across his eyes, and blushed, and wrung George's hand with all his might.

"Not guilty of what, in Heaven's name?" asks Mr. Warrington.

"Nay," said the General, "Mr. Jack, here, brought the story. Let him tell it. I believe 'tis a — lie, with all my heart." And uttering this wicked expression, the General fairly walked out of the room.

The Rev. J. Lambert looked uncommonly foolish.

"And what is this—this d—d lie, sir, that somebody has been telling of me?" asked George, grinning at the young clergyman.

"To question the courage of any man, is always an offence to him," says Mr. Lambert, "and I rejoice that yours has been belied."

"Who told the falsehood, sir, which you repeated?" bawls out Mr. Warrington. "I insist on the man's name!"

"You forget you are bound over to keep the peace," says Jack.

"Curse the peace, sir! We can go and fight in Holland. Tell me the man's name, I say!"

"Fair and softly, Mr. Warrington!" cries the young parson, "my hearing is perfectly good. It was not a man who told me the story which, I confess, I imparted to my father."

"What?" asks George, the truth suddenly occurring. "Was it that artful, wicked little vixen in Bloomsbury Square?"

"Vixen is not the word to apply to any young lady, George Warrington!" exclaims Lambert, "much less to the charming Miss Lydia. She artful—the most innocent of Heaven's creatures! She wicked—that angel! With unfeigned delight that the quarrel should be over—with devout gratitude to think that blood consanguineous should not be shed—she spoke in terms of the highest praise of you for declining this quarrel, and of the deepest sympathy with you for taking the painful but only method of averting it."

"What method?" demands George, stamping his foot.

"Why, of laying an information, to be sure!" says Mr. Jack; on which George burst forth into language much too violent for us to repeat here, and highly uncomplimentary to Miss Lydia.

"Don't utter such words, sir!" cried the parson, who, as it seemed, now took his turn to be angry. "Do not insult, in my hearing, the most charming, the most innocent of her sex! If she has been mistaken in her information regarding you, and doubted your willingness to commit what, after all, is a crime—for a crime homicide is, and of the most awful description—you, sir, have no right to blacken that angel's character with foul words: and, innocent yourself, should respect the most innocent as she is the most lovely of women! O, George, are you to be my brother?"

"I hope to have that honour," answered George, smiling. He began to perceive the other's drift.

"What, then, what—though 'tis too much bliss to be hoped for by sinful man—what, if she should one day be your sister? Who could see her charms without being subjugated by them? I own that I am a slave. I own that those Latin Sapphics in the September number of the Gentleman's Magazine, beginning *Lydia quondam cecinit venusta* (with an English version by my friend Hickson of Corpus) were mine. I have told my mother what hath passed between us, and Mrs. Lambert also thinks that the most lovely of her sex has deigned to look favourably on me. I have composed a letter—she another. She proposes to wait on Miss Lydia's grandpapa this very day, and to bring me the answer, which shall make me the happiest or the most wretched of men! It was in the unrestrained intercourse of family conversation that I chanced to impart to my father the sentiments which my dear girl had uttered. Perhaps I spoke slightly of your courage, which I don't doubt—by Heaven, I don't doubt: it may be, she has erred, too, regarding you. It may be, that the fiend jealousy has been gnawing

at my bosom and—horrible suspicion!—that I thought my sister's lover found too much favour with her I would have all my own. Ah, dear George, who knows his faults? I am as one distracted with passion. Confound it, sir! What right have you to laugh at me? I would have you to know that *risu inepto*”

“What, have you two boys made it up?” cries the General, entering at this moment, in the midst of a roar of laughter from George.

“I was giving my opinion to Mr. Warrington upon laughter, and upon his laughter in particular,” says Jack Lambert, in a fume.

“George is bound over to keep the peace, Jack! Thou canst not fight him for two years; and between now and then, let us trust you will have made up your quarrel. Here is dinner, boys! We will drink absent friends, and an end to the war, and no fighting out of the profession!”

George pleaded an engagement, as a reason for running away early from his dinner; and Jack must have speedily followed him, for when the former, after transacting some brief business at his own lodgings, came to Mr. Van den Bosch's door, in Bloomsbury Square, he found the young parson already in parley with a servant there. “His master and mistress had left town yesterday,” the servant said.

“Poor Jack! And you had the decisive letter in your pocket?” George asked of his future brother-in-law.

“Well, yes,”—Jack owned he had the document—“and my mother has ordered a chair, and was coming to wait on Miss Lyddy,” he whispered piteously, as the young men lingered on the steps.

George had a note, too, in his pocket for the young lady, which he had not cared to mention to Jack. In truth, his business at home had been to write a smart note to Miss Lyddy, with a message for the gentleman who had brought her that funny story of his giving information regarding the duel! The family being absent, George, too, did not choose to leave his note. “If Cousin Will has been the slander-bearer, I will go and make him recant,” thought George. “Will the family soon be back?” he blandly asked.

“They are gone to visit the quality,” the servant replied. “Here is the address on this paper;” and George read, in Miss Lydia's hand, “The box from Madam Hocquet's to be sent by the Farnham Flying Coach; addressed to Miss Van den Bosch, at the Right Honourable the Earl of Castlewood's, Castlewood, Hants.”

“Where?” cried poor Jack, aghast.

“His lordship and their ladyships have been here often,” the servant said, with much importance. “The families is quite intimate.”

This was very strange; for, in the course of their conversation, Lyddy had owned but to one single visit from Lady Castlewood.

“And they must be a-going to stay there some time, for Miss have took a power of boxes and gowns with her!” the man added. And the young men walked away, each crumpling his letter in his pocket.

“What was that remark you made?” asks George of Jack, at some exclamation of the latter. “I think you said——”

"Distraction! I am beside myself, George! I—I scarce know what I am saying," groans the clergyman. "She is gone to Hampshire, and Mr. Esmond is gone with her!"

"Othello could not have spoken better! and she has a pretty scoundrel in her company!" says Mr. George. "Ha! Here is your mother's chair!" Indeed, at this moment poor Aunt Lambert came swinging down Great Russell Street, preceded by her footman. "'Tis no use going farther, Aunt Lambert!" cries George. "Our little bird has flown."

"What little bird?"

"The bird Jack wished to pair with:—the Lyddy bird, Aunt. Why, Jack, I protest you are swearing again! This morning 'twas the Sixth Commandment you wanted to break; and now——"

"Confound it! leave me alone, Mr. Warrington, do you hear?" growls Jack, looking very savage; and away he strides far out of the reach of his mother's bearers.

"What is the matter, George?" asks the lady.

George, who has not been very well pleased with brother Jack's behaviour all day, says: "Brother Jack has not a fine temper, Aunt Lambert. He informs you all that I am a coward, and remonstrates with me for being angry. He finds his mistress gone to the country, and he bawls, and stamps, and swears. O, fie! O, Aunt Lambert, beware of jealousy! Did the quarrel ever make you jealous?"

"You will make me very angry if you speak to me in this way," says poor Aunt Lambert, from her chair.

"I am respectfully dumb. I make my bow. I withdraw," says George, with a low bow, and turns towards Holborn. His soul was wrath within him. He was bent on quarrelling with somebody. Had he met Cousin Will that night, it had gone ill with his sureties.

He sought Will at all his haunts, at Arthur's, at his own house. There Lady Castlewood's servants informed him that they believed Mr. Esmond had gone to join the family in Hants. He wrote a letter to his cousin:

"My dear, kind cousin William," he said, "you know I am bound over, and would not quarrel with any one, much less with a dear, truth-telling, affectionate kinsman, whom my brother insulted by caning. But if you can find any one who says that I prevented a meeting the other day by giving information, will you tell your informant that I think it is not I but somebody else is the coward? And I write to Mr. Van den Bosch by the same post, to inform him and Miss Lyddy that I find some rascal has been telling them lies to my discredit, and to beg them to have a care of such persons." And, these neat letters being dispatched, Mr. Warrington dressed himself, showed himself at the play, and took supper cheerfully at the Bedford.

In a few days George found a letter on his breakfast table franked "Castlewood," and, indeed, written by that nobleman.

"Dear Cousin," my lord wrote, "there has been so much annoyance

in our family of late, that I am sure 'tis time our quarrels should cease. Two days since my brother William brought me a very angry letter, signed G. Warrington, and at the same time, to my great grief and pain, acquainted me with a quarrel that had taken place between you, in which, to say the least, your conduct was violent. 'Tis an ill use to put good wine to—that to which you applied good Mr. Van den Bosch's. Sure, before an old man, young ones should be more respectful. I do not deny that Wm.'s language and behaviour are often irritating. I know he has often tried my temper, and that within the 24 hours.

"Ah! Why should we not all live happily together? You know, cousin, I have ever professed a sincere regard for you—that I am a sincere admirer of the admirable young lady to whom you are engaged, and to whom I offer my most cordial compliments and remembrances. I would live in harmony with all my family where 'tis possible—the more because I hope to introduce to it a Countess of Castlewood.

"At my mature age, 'tis not uncommon for a man to choose a young wife. My Lydia (you will divine that I am happy in being able to call mine the elegant Miss Van den Bosch) will naturally survive me. After soothing my declining years, I shall not be jealous if at their close she should select some happy man to succeed me; though I shall envy him the possession of so much perfection and beauty. Though of a noble Dutch family, her rank, the dear girl declares, is not equal to mine, which she confesses that she is pleased to share. I, on the other hand, shall not be sorry to see descendants to my house, and to have it, through my Lady Castlewood's means, restored to something of the splendour which it knew before two or three improvident predecessors impaired it. My Lydia, who is by my side, sends you and the charming Lambert family her warmest remembrances.

"The marriage will take place very speedily here. May I hope to see you at church? My brother will not be present to quarrel with you. When I and dear Lydia announced the match to him yesterday, he took the intelligence in bad part, uttered language that I know he will one day regret, and is at present on a visit to some neighbours. The Dowager Lady Castlewood retains the house at Kensington; we having our own establishment, where you will ever be welcomed, dear cousin, by your affectionate humble servant,

"CASTLEWOOD."

From the London Magazine of November, 1759:

"Saturday, October 13th, married, at his seat, Castlewood, Hants, the Right Honourable Eugene Earl of Castlewood to the beautiful Miss Van den Bosch, of Virginia. £70,000."

PERFUMERY FACTORS.

PIESSE & LUBIN'S **PESTACHIO NUT** SKIN & COMPLEXION POWDER.

(Registered according as the Act directs.) Exhibition Medal—awarded 1851.

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THIS Toilet Powder imparts to the Skin a natural whiteness, youthful delicacy, and softness, attainable by no other means.

Brownness of the Neck or Arms, undue Redness of the Face and Hands, are obviated by one application of this exquisite discovery. For personal appearance at Court, the Ball or Concert, it is indispensable, especially as it represses the unpleasantness of sensible Perspiration and its disagreeable accompaniments. Travellers and residents in warm climates will highly appreciate this simple appendage to the Toilet.

It will be found superior to any other article for preventing that Moisture in the Hands so detrimental to Fancy Needlework. When applied to the Joints of the Arm it prevents any discoloration of the Dress. To Actresses and Singers it is of infinite service, subduing that Redness of Features caused by exertion, and cooling the skin in a most delightful manner. During the heats of Summer, if used morning and evening, and before the promenade, no unpleasant Redness or Flushing of the Face will be observed; so totally does it prevent the discolouring action of the Sun on the Skin, that Freckles are unknown to those who use the Pestachio Nut Powder. In the Winter Season it is an indispensable appendage to the Toilet and Nursery, especially for children, as by using it to dry the skin after washing, Chapped Hands, Chafed and Rough Skin are with certainty prevented.

It is strongly recommended to Gentlemen to rub over the chin after the use of the razor, as it at once allays the irritation produced by shaving.

The PESTACHIO NUTS being an edible fruit, this Powder, which is prepared from them, can be relied on for its absolute innocence and simplicity of composition.

METHOD OF USE.

After washing, rub the Powder freely over the Face, Neck, Arms, and Hands, either with a Puff or Fine Cotton Wool. In a day or so its beneficial effect will surprise all who use it.

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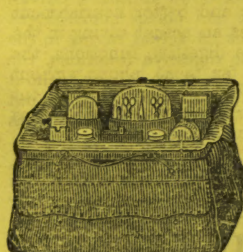
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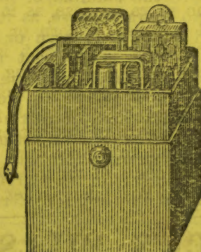
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